



# The Seeker's Guide: Making Your Life a Spiritual Adventure

By Elizabeth Lesser

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**The Seeker's Guide: Making Your Life a Spiritual Adventure** By Elizabeth Lesser

In 1977, Elizabeth Lesser cofounded the Omega Institute, now America's largest adult-education center focusing on wellness and spirituality. Working with many of the eminent thinkers of our times, including Zen masters, rabbis, Christian monks, psychologists, scientists, and an array of noted American figures--from L.A. Lakers coach Phil Jackson to author Maya Angelou--Lesser found that by combining a variety of religious, psychological, and healing traditions, each of us has the unique ability to satisfy our spiritual hunger.

In **The Seeker's Guide**, she synthesizes the lessons learned from an immersion into the world's wisdom traditions and intertwines them with illuminating stories from her daily life. Recounting her own trials and errors and offering meditative exercises, she shows the reader how to create a personal practice, gauge one's progress, and choose effective spiritual teachers and habits. Warm, accessible, and wise, this book provides directions through the four landscapes of the spiritual journey:

THE MIND: learning meditation to ease stress and anxiety

THE HEART: dealing with grief, loss, and pain; opening the heart and becoming fully alive

THE BODY: returning the body to the spiritual fold to heal and overcome the fear of aging and death

THE SOUL: experiencing daily life as an adventure of meaning and mystery

*From the Trade Paperback edition.*

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## **The Seeker's Guide: Making Your Life a Spiritual Adventure** By Elizabeth Lesser **Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

### **Amazon.com Review**

Elizabeth Lesser, cofounder of the Omega Institute, speaks to America's cross-pollination of religious, psychological, metaphysical, and ancient traditions that have flowered into contemporary spirituality. Like many seekers, Lesser has discovered a deeply personal religious path--one that wandered through Zen Buddhist monasteries, meandered through Christian churches, dabbled in African and Native American traditions, and expanded into the teachings of the Great Mother. Using her own journey as the road map, Lesser discusses why so many Americans are coming to a deeply personal form of religion--one that does not prescribe to a specific doctrine or definition of God.

Although she expertly performs the role of memoirist and observer, Lesser has stretched this book into a useful tool for all seekers. She offers numerous suggestions, such as how to listen to your body, increase your spiritual bank account, "live the questions" rather than "seek the answers," and create a supportive community. This is a moving workbook for anyone who's hoping to find, claim, or simply maintain their spiritual truths. --*Gail Hudson*

### **From Publishers Weekly**

"If spirituality is not religion or cynicism or sentimentality or narcissism, then what is it?... we can confidently say... that spirituality is fearlessness. It is a way of looking boldly at this life we have been given, here, now, on earth, as this human being." Lesser, cofounder of the Omega Institute, a pioneering holistic learning community in upstate New York, blends autobiography with broader observation to offer readers a compelling, commonsense guide to a new American style of spiritual search that she has watched coalesce over the past decades. Tracing her own path from idealistic Barnard student to young wife, mother and ardent communard follower of Sufi teacher Pir Vilayat, Lesser describes how she (and a generation of seekers) have gradually expanded the Puritan ideal of personal spiritual transformation to include deep psychological, physical and creative work. Only as we learn to accept and cherish ourselves as we really are, Lesser shows, can we tap our innate wisdom. Drawing inspiration from teachers and teachings from many traditions, infusing each chapter with her own stories and experience, Lesser reveals how illuminating it can be to turn the light of awareness and acceptance on ourselves. Several times, she offers this quote by the great Sufi poet Rumi: "When you do things from your soul, you feel a river moving in you, a joy." With honesty, warmth and seasoned judgment, Lesser leads readers to the water. Even the publisher's unfortunate decision to include blurbs praising the book from teachers and authors mentioned in its pages does not undermine a modest integrity and intelligence that is the best advertisement for the new American spirituality. (June)

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### **From Booklist**

As cofounder of the innovative Omega Institute in New York State, Lesser is in a unique position to assess the current state of spirituality in the U.S. For more than 20 years, the Omega Institute has offered teachings from a cornucopia of religious, scientific, and artistic disciplines, reflecting what Lesser believes is a new approach to spirituality based on the values of democracy, diversity, and individuality. To map this complex of perspectives, she describes the four landscapes anyone embarking on a spiritual journey must traverse: the landscapes of the mind, the heart, the body, and the soul. The guides she's chosen to help her cross these terrains include the Sufi teacher Pir Vilayat, Teilhard de Chardin, Joseph Campbell, and Thich Nhat Hanh. Lesser's anecdotal narrative includes numerous concise profiles of spiritual figures and interpretations of

their beliefs and practices as well as meditation exercises and straightforward advice. Attuned to the "weeds" in the garden of spirituality, including narcissism, superficiality, and a desire for magic, Lesser's knowledge is matched by her candor. *Donna Seaman*

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#### **Janie Williams:**

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